

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: Urban Design Committee

DATE, TIME AND

PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, April 4, 2001, 3:00 p.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS AND OTHERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members:	Gordon Scholz, Third World Oforah, Dennis Scheer, Kim Todd, and JoAnne Kissel
Others:	John Williams (Sinclair Hille), Steve Schwab (Parks & Recreation), Ernie Castillo (Urban Development), Ed Zimmer and Missy Minner (Planning Dept.)

STATED PURPOSE

OF THE MEETING: Regular Meeting of the Urban Design Committee

Approval of minutes of March 7, 2001.

Motion for approval made by Scholz, seconded by Oforah. Motion for approval carried 3-0, Scholz, Oforah, and Scheer voting 'yes'; Todd, Kissel, and Sullivan absent.

Review of street scape designs for 9th Street, K to R Streets.

John Williams, Sinclair Hille, explained that the design is somewhere between the schematic and construction phases. The intent of the contract with DLA is a street trees replacement program. This focuses on creating opportunities for street trees. That includes the removal of concrete and the establishment of planting beds along 9th Street. The general concept is to provide large overstory trees on the blocks from O Street to K Street and to provide the opportunity below those trees for shrub plantings.

In terms of plant material on K Street, there are existing maples on the west side, those are to remain. On the east side, they are introducing some autumn purple ash, below those will be some morden blush shrub roses. As you continue to the north, at L Street, swamp white oak trees will be used, with the shrub roses below. The M - N Street block uses Kentucky Coffee trees, some of the existing trees will stay. Across the street, the existing trees will stay except those that are damaged which will be removed. The planting beds on this block have been moved back from the curb to allow access for the parking meters. The N-O Street block uses Patmore Ash and shrub roses. There is an existing Ash tree that will stay. There are existing Maple on the other side of the street that will be moved a City park.

The next step is to present this plan to the business owners. The business owners have expressed concern about who will maintain the trees. DLA is under contract to weed this area. The drip irrigation system that is proposed will take care of a lot of the maintenance issues. Neither the Water Department nor Public Works see any problems. There will be a separate irrigation system on the east and west sides of the street. Approximately \$50,000 was budgeted for the irrigation system, the total project budget is about \$80,000.

Scheer asked what type of drip irrigation they are proposing. Williams stated that it is a poly tubing type. Scheer indicated that is not successful because it is at mulch level and can be pulled out by people or by snow removal equipment. That type of irrigation is not an acceptable long term capital improvement.

Todd added that they should consider 3' rugosa type roses.

Scholz asked how the openings in sidewalk will be dealt with. Williams stated that, ideally, the cutouts will align with the existing pavement joints. The worst case, will be cutting the beds in the center of a 6x6 existing square. The existing cutouts that are not covered by planting beds will be filled in with concrete. There is no curbing on this project, curbing was discussed, but they decided that it was not necessary here. There will be wood chip mulch on the planting beds. Todd stated that the V edge will keep the mulch from spilling out on the sidewalk.

Todd suggested moving approval with a cautionary note on the roses, and a suggestion that DLA consider other options for irrigation. Scheer added that there needs to be a more permanent solution to irrigation. The proposed type of irrigation will result in more maintenance than they think. DLA has indicated that maintenance of a permanent irrigation system with pop up heads is costly because the heads can be damaged by snow removal. The good thing about the permanent irrigation is that the pipe is buried 2 feet below the planting bed. There has to be a solution that will work everywhere.

Todd suggested a quick coupler system be used. Scheer indicated that those can be located away from the sidewalk. The issue with those is that a hose will have to be hauled down to water them. Todd pointed out that it could be left plugged in, except during the winter.

Scheer felt that \$50,000 for irrigation should be a 20 year capital improvement.

Schwab stated that the concept of drip irrigation is to get plant materials established, it is not designed for longevity. The cost and maintenance of a quick coupler is a more practical approach. It is currently the most trouble free irrigation system that could be used for downtown. The quick coupler is a multi-purpose water source. He suggested that this be addressed at the next DLA committee meeting. Todd added that quick couplers could be installed at 150' intervals.

Todd moved approval with a suggestion that alternative approaches to irrigation be considered and a caution about the choice of roses in this area, seconded by Scholz. Motion for approval carried 4-0; Todd, Scholz, Oforah, and Scheer voting 'yes', Kissel abstaining, and Sullivan absent.

Scheer's portion of this project is on the east side of 9th Street from P to R Street. This is the new Journal Star building. This project proposes demolishing all of the items from the Journal Star building including the elevated sidewalk and the construction of a new street curb. This area varies from 20-25 feet wide. There is no opportunity to do anything between the property line and the Journal Star.

Everything will be removed on the old Journal Star building block from the curb to the loading dock. The curb will stay where it is.

From P - Q Street, they would like to put in a continuous planting bed. They are considering having colored concrete at the north end of the block. The 8' wide sidewalk will mimic the pattern of the sidewalks on P Street. There has been a lot of discussion about the width of the sidewalk. Public Works is proposing a 12' sidewalk because of heavy traffic in the area during football games. They would prefer 8' to allow the needed distance for trees and lights. The street lights will be single acorn lights, similar to those in front of the new Journal Star building, on black poles. There will be 8 lights per block along the sidewalks. There

will be two trash receptacles, one at either end of the block. They have not been able to include all the entryway items because of budget, snow removal, etc. No benches are being proposed in the area.

The dock face is not aesthetic, it could be painted or perhaps they could do a brick or limestone veneer on it. If the Committee has an opinion, this is an opportunity that could have an impact along the sidewalk. The dock is approximately 6-8 feet wide.

They have talked about continuing this street scape to the block in front of the parking garage. It is important to keep in mind that the use is different. On the west side of the street is the gas station, Barry's, etc. The businesses don't want plants in front of their signs. A matching theme will not work in this area.

Kissel asked if the failure to match on both sides of the street departs from the entryway study. Scheer indicated that was not addressed in the study.

The block on the east side of 9th Street between Q and R Streets will be a buff concrete sidewalk. The same scheme is planned here, except that they are including turf. They are basically matching the landscaping around the building. The trees in this location will be in the turf. The same kind of lights and trash receptacles are planned. They are trying to deal with the existing street lights that need to be relocated. The planting scheme will be similar. At south end of the block, the continuous bed will be between 6 and 8 feet wide.

Ernie Castillo of Urban Development said the Journal Star has agreed to maintain the turf. Zimmer asked if there is a functioning agreement in place on maintenance of the turf that worked well last year? Castillo indicated that there is not.

The Committee suggested that based on experience, design and maintenance challenges they would not recommend approval of the turf strip.

Scheer indicated that would not effect what they are doing except that the trees would not be in the middle of the turf. That would be OK. If the planter could be moved to the sidewalk, they could move the trees. That would be good.

Zimmer indicated that the trees are a safety feature here because of the separation of the pedestrian traffic and the traffic.

Schwab mentioned that he spoke with Nemaha Nursery whose last conversation with the Journal Star was for Summit Ash and Colorado Green Spruce. The underground utilities will make planting evergreens difficult. Potentially, they can't plant anything.

Todd suggested that an 18-24 inch canopy be allowed with only 2 or 3 species maximum.

Scholz wondered about the extent of adhering to the entryway study. This is setting a precedent. Scheer stated that they tried to pick up as many of the elements as they could without getting into the ones that would put them over budget or that Public Works would object to.

Todd moved approval with conditions that the planter is moved to the curb and the turf is removed,

seconded by Oforah. Motion for conditional approval carried 4-0; Todd, Scholz, Oforah, and Kissel voting 'yes', Scheer abstaining, and Sullivan absent.

Zimmer stated that he would address a memo to the Mayor and Urban Development stating the vote of the Committee.

Staff Report.

Zimmer stated there has been considerable discussion about how cell towers on public land could be handled. The Mayor's office is working on a policy statement. The Urban Design Committee is being considering as the public process for those towers. The cell tower ordinance states that applications should be reviewed by the Committee. That is still under discussion.

Members agreed that cell towers in parks need more review than just the Parks Advisory Board.

Enersen Urban Design Award candidate projects.

One formal nomination was received prior to the meeting. The nomination was for St. Paul's Church.

Members discussed other possible nominations including the hiker/biker at 27th Street, Star City Shores, the Wyuka entrance, the Haymarket Ruby Tuesday's, the Sinclair Hille Architect building, and the foundation garden.

Scheer thought it would be nice to have the foundation garden because that was a Larry Enersen project. He was also fine with the St. Paul building.

Zimmer indicated that there are generally two awards given. It is important to give an award this year because none was given last year.

Todd didn't believe the North 27th Street project should be considered because it is not finished. The Sinclair Hille building is a strong candidate. Zimmer added that the Sinclair Hille project was reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission, even though it was not required to go before them.

Todd moved acceptance of the Wyuka 'O' Street entrance redevelopment, and the Sinclair Hille building, seconded by Scholz. Motion for approval carried 4-0; Todd, Scholz, Oforah, and Scheer voting 'yes', Kissel abstaining, and Sullivan absent.

Todd suggested the other projects remain on the list to be considered next year.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.